



TOM O'HALLERAN

1ST DISTRICT, ARIZONA

December 19, 2019

The Honorable R.D. James
Assistant Secretary for the Army (Civil Works)
108 Pentagon (Army)
Washington, DC 20310-0108

Lt. General Todd Semonite
Chief, Army Corps of Engineers
441 G Street, NW
Washington, DC 20314-1000

RE: Rio de Flag Flood Control Project (Flagstaff, Arizona)

Dear Assistant Secretary James and Lieutenant General Semonite:

We are writing to express our strong support for \$52 million in the Fiscal Year 2020 work plan to complete the Rio de Flag flood control project in Flagstaff, Arizona. Its completion is critical to the public safety, health and protection of lives and property as well as the economic viability of the City of Flagstaff.

A significant flood event would directly affect more than half of Flagstaff's population of approximately 75,000 residents and would result in damages to approximately 1,500 structures valued at over \$916,000,000 (from an analysis conducted in 2008). For the last 30 years, the City of Flagstaff's top priority has been to mitigate potential flood damage caused by the Rio de Flag. Since FY 2002, the Rio de Flag flood control project has received more than \$30 million in federal appropriations for various phases of the project. With these resources, the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has conducted the reconnaissance and feasibility studies, completed the pre-construction engineering and design (PED), and begun the construction phase.

Because of this funding, 100 percent design on the project is expected to be completed in May 2020. Completion of the 100 percent plans will ensure a design certain that will result in lowering contingencies, increasing the benefit-to-cost ratio (BCR), finalizing property acquisition, design of utility relocations and bridge design in partnership with BNSF Railroad. More importantly, 100 percent design completion will allow the Rio de Flag project to complete the remaining \$52 million in construction.

As you know, the House Energy and Water Appropriations bill contains \$2.34 billion for Corps construction, which is a \$154 million increase over FY 2019 enacted levels. The Senate bill increases the construction line-item by \$612 million over last year's levels. In other words, there is likely to be a significant increase in Corps construction funding in FY 2020. We respectfully ask that you use a small portion of this funding to complete the Rio de Flag project.

The federal government and the City of Flagstaff have already invested nearly \$45 million in this project. Delaying it would be irresponsible and a waste of taxpayer dollars already expended that could result in huge losses of property and increase the risk of the loss of life and creation of public health and safety issues. That is why we strongly support \$52 million in FY 2020 funding to complete the remaining portions of this project to ensure that downtown Flagstaff, Northern Arizona University, BNSF Railroad, and the historic Southside community are permanently protected from a catastrophic flood that continue to hamper northern Arizona's largest city.

As always, we ask that this matter is handled in strict accordance with all agency, rules, regulations and ethical guidelines. Please do not hesitate to contact our offices with questions, or if we can be of further assistance.

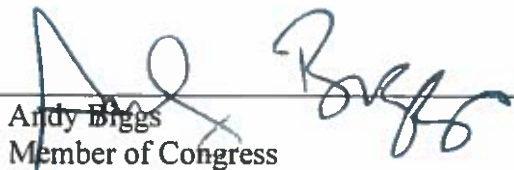
Sincerely,


Tom O'Halleran
Member of Congress


Ann Kirkpatrick
Member of Congress


Raúl Grijalva
Member of Congress


Paul A. Gosar, D.D.S.
Member of Congress


Andy Biggs
Member of Congress


David Schweikert
Member of Congress


Ruben Gallego
Member of Congress


Greg Stanton
Member of Congress